

In recent months, some major (and very expensive) railway upgrades have just been completed. These include the Chiltern Line which runs from London to Birmingham, and the Cotswold Line between Oxford and Worcester. The Chiltern Line improvements have brought places like Thame, Bicester, Banbury and Leamington within commuting distance, whilst the Cotswold Line development has done the same for places within reach of Kingham and Moreton-in-Marsh.

Elsewhere in the country, train services to Lincoln and Cambridge are being improved. Crossrail, and the associated Great Western Main Line electrification will give a boost to commuting from the west side of London.

It all adds up to a buoyant property market, as is spelled out in the [Daily Telegraph's Property section](#), which reports "hot spots" where demand is strong despite the recession.

The Chiltern Line investment was made by the train operating company Chiltern Railway, owned by Deutsche Bahn, but most of the rest has been at the taxpayers' expense, which makes one ask who is being taken for a ride? We are not against infrastructure improvements - on the contrary. We merely suggest that when the work has been finished and the benefits start to show, those who gain the most should contribute the most.

There should also be a lesson for government ministers puzzled about what to do to get the country out of recession. Relatively small infrastructure schemes such as these are complete after just a few years and the benefits come quickly. Network Rail and some local authorities have a list of projects of this kind. They just await the green signal. There is nothing wrong with printing money to pay for them, provided that the land value gains they give rise to are reclaimed afterwards through the land value tax system that the Campaign is advocating.